

# Summarised inspection findings

**Noss Primary School Nursery Class**

The Highland Council

11 February 2020

## Key contextual information

Noss Early Learning and Childcare (ELC) is situated within Noss Primary School in the town of Wick, The Highland Council. They offer flexible provision to children aged three years to those not yet attending school. The ELC is registered for 80 children at any given time and at the time of inspection, there was 77 children on the roll.

### 2.3 Learning, teaching and assessment

good

This indicator focuses on ensuring high quality learning experience for young children. It highlights the importance of a very good understanding of child development and early learning pedagogy. Effective use is made of observation to inform future learning and identify the progress made. Children are involved in planning for their own learning. Together these ensure children's successes and achievements are maximised. The themes are:

- learning and engagement
- quality of teaching
- effective use of assessment
- planning, tracking and monitoring

- Children and their parents receive a friendly welcome from practitioners as they arrive each day at the ELC. They feel at ease due to the caring, practitioner team. As a result, the environment for learning is nurturing. The three playrooms, outdoor space and the Secret Noss Forest provide children with interesting opportunities for curiosity, inquiry and risk taking. Nurturing and supportive relationships between children, staff and parents are a key feature of the setting.
- Most children make choices confidently about where they want to play. Most children concentrate for extended periods of time, for example, listening to stories, playing with water outdoors and exploring textures in the forest. Practitioners increasingly provide open-ended and natural materials to support children's play. Practitioners should continue to develop their loose parts resources to encourage children's problem solving skills. Children benefit from an extensive outdoor space where they regularly take part in energetic, exploratory, creative and imaginative play. Most are confident at taking turns, organising themselves and are comfortable with the routines of the session. Most children play cooperatively, sharing tools and kitchen utensils. They show good levels of empathy for each other during their play and are kind and caring.
- Practitioners know the children very well. There are a few good examples of practitioners using questions appropriately to support children to extend their thinking. All practitioners should continue to develop skilful questioning skills in order to support children to make connections in their learning. Practitioners need to raise their expectations for children's learning to ensure experiences offer depth and challenge. Practitioners should continue to involve children more in the setting up of the learning environment.
- Practitioners respond well to children's ideas and suggestions and are beginning to record these in floorbooks. They are continuing to develop their confidence in enabling children to lead their own learning and create their own plans. Practitioners continue to develop planning methods in order to 'plan in the moment', as well as ensuring that the playrooms have a range of planned experiences available. They should continue to reflect on the balance between adult directed and child led experiences. As planning evolves, children need to be supported further in thinking about what they already know and what they would like to learn next.

- Weekly and termly meetings support practitioners to develop, plan, and track and monitor children's progress. As a result, practitioners are gaining confidence in making judgements about children's progress in learning. Their assessments and observations inform planning and tracking of children's progress over time and across the curriculum.
- Children's progress is discussed appropriately with parents on an ongoing basis. Their individual learning journals contain photographic evidence and a few quality observations, capture and record children's learning. Practitioners should continue to develop a consistent approach to recording high quality observations of children's learning. Parents are encouraged to contribute to the learning journals, sharing information regularly from home. The learning journals also include, 'All about Me' information and developmental overviews. In addition, parents meet with the key worker to discuss their child's development and learning formally.
- Children's progress is monitored effectively through regular tracking meetings and shared across the early level. As a result, transitions into primary school are supported well and children settle quickly. Practitioners across the early level meet regularly to reflect on information gathered in P1 and discuss curricular developments.

## 2.1 Safeguarding and child protection

- The school submitted self-evaluation information related to child protection and safeguarding. Inspectors discussed this information with relevant staff and, where appropriate, children. In addition, inspectors examined a sample of safeguarding documentation. Areas for development have been agreed with the school and the education authority.

### 3.2 Securing children's progress

good

This indicator relates to the development and learning of babies, toddlers and young children. It requires clear understanding of early learning and development and pedagogy. It reflects the integrated way young children learn and the importance of experiences and development happening on an individual basis within a supportive, nurturing and stimulating environment. High quality early learning and childcare contributes significantly to enhancing children's progress and achievement as they grow and learn. It can benefit all children by closing the attainment gap and ensuring equity for all. It is about the holistic nature of development and learning ensuring these foundations are secure in order to achieve future attainment success. The themes are:

- progress in communication, early language, mathematics, and health and wellbeing
- children's progress over time
- overall quality of children's achievement
- ensuring equity for all children

- Most children are making good progress in communication and language. Most listen well and recall confidently familiar stories using descriptive language and props. Children access books, both fiction and non-fiction independently and take books home on a weekly basis. Spontaneous and planned singing supports vocabulary well for most children. Most talk confidently and listen considerately to their peers and adults. A few children require additional support to develop further their talking and listening. Most children are beginning to recognise their name and a few write their name independently. Children mark-make, including through painting and drawing increasingly detailed pictures. Children's creativity is being limited through the use of pre-printed worksheets. Children should develop their progress further through writing independently and for a purpose. They need to continue to make further progress in developing their literacy.
- Overall, most children are making good progress in numeracy and mathematics. Children are developing their progress in number recognition through daily practice, including choosing the number of items for snack. Most children show an interest in numbers, and can count to five with confidence, with a few counting beyond. A few children are capable of further progress in counting, for example developing one to one correspondence using larger numbers. Most children know colours well and discuss shape and size, for example, 'this music triangle has three sides'. Others can weigh and measure, increasingly using loose parts, allowing them to problem solve and estimate. A few children use the language of measure as they compare the size of the three bears chairs and beds. Outdoors, a few children used muddy footprints to discuss size and pattern. Children need to continue to develop numeracy and mathematics further across meaningful contexts. A few children are capable of securing further progress in numeracy and mathematics.
- Most children are making good progress in health and wellbeing, with a few making very good progress. They are happy and have fun in a relaxed and nurturing space indoors and outdoors. Most children are developing their gross motor skills well as they ride bikes outdoors, making a ramp with loose parts and balancing their bikes on wooden planks. Most climb the chute with confidence and take part in weekly gym sessions. Children are making healthy choices at snack, serving themselves, rinsing their plates and loading the dishwasher. Most engage well in hygiene routines, independently washing their hands and brushing their teeth. Children are beginning to express and manage their feelings through the daily 'emotional check-in'. Children need to continue to develop how to describe with confidence their thoughts and feelings.

- Most children are making good progress, with a few making very good progress over time. Children's progress over time is tracked well through termly meetings with the principal teacher. Tracking information includes a focus on literacy, numeracy, health and wellbeing and next steps in learning.
- Children develop a sense of achievement and success through effective support. Daily routines and trips to the forest support children's achievements, which are linked to the four capacities. For example, children are developing as confident individuals as they negotiate their way independently across the spacious learning environment indoors and outdoors. Daily praise and encouragement from practitioners actively promotes children's confidence and self-esteem. Practitioners record wider achievements using 'Wow sheets', which are monitored to ensure no child misses out on celebrating and achieving success. Parents contribute by sharing information from home and practitioners capture success in the ELC.
- Equity is evident across the ELC. Children's 'All about Me' which parents complete when starting, support practitioners to begin to know children very well. The inclusive and supportive ethos supports all children to make good progress. Children who may face potential barriers to their learning are included in language and communication programmes. As a result, children are progressing well in communication and language.

### 1. Quality of care and support

The nursery staff had established very good working relationships with the families. Parents/carers were all very positive in their comments about the friendliness and approachability of the staff. They were also happy with the levels of communication and feedback provided. Within the main reception, there were large noticeboards displaying relevant information for families. Parents and carers welcomed the opportunities available to them to be involved in the nursery. They enjoyed the various stay and play sessions and accompanying the children on the forest sessions.

We observed extremely warm and nurturing relationships between the staff and the children in their care. Staff had a good knowledge and understanding of the individual care needs of each of the children. During the inspection, we observed very positive interactions between the staff and the children. They engaged with children and provided them with appropriate encouragement, praise and support.

Each of the children had a personal care plan in place. Staff need to ensure that these are routinely reviewed and, where necessary, updated to reflect the needs of the children. The date when plans are reviewed should be clearly recorded.

Staff had established positive links and worked with other professionals to support the health and wellbeing needs of the children. They were in regular communication with a range of services including social services, physiotherapy and SALT.

All staff had attended a range of training including child protection and first aid training and routinely attended refresher courses. Appropriate records were completed in relation to accidents and incidents. Parents/carers were asked to sign these and were provided with a copy. There was also an appropriate system in place in relation to the administration of medication.

During the inspection, we observed snack. This was a sociable experience. Snacks were healthy and took account of any allergies and dietary needs the children might have. Consideration should also be given to less reliance on plastic. Following the previous Care Inspectorate inspection, a recommendation was made to review arrangements for snack to improve the children's involvement in planning and preparing snack. This recommendation had been fully actioned.

The service was beginning to make greater use of floorbooks. As part of the inspection we looked at the most recent floorbooks. The service should continue to develop and make greater use of floorbooks to plan, develop, record and review what the children would like to learn, what they had learnt and what they would like to learn next. Some further training in this area would be beneficial for staff.

**Care Inspectorate grade: very good**

### 2. Quality of environment

The service was based in three playrooms. The rooms were all clean, bright and very welcoming. There were appropriate toilet facilities for the children and a large cloakroom and welcoming reception area. In response to a recommendation made at a previous inspection, the children had access to paper towels in the toilets.

The entrance to the service was secure and was monitored by staff at the beginning and end of each session. Staff checked the playroom daily to ensure that it was safe. There were also appropriate risk assessments in place. We discussed with the manager increasing the children's involvement in risk assessing, especially when undertaking visits to the local woodland area.

Within the playroom, we observed the children being fully engaged in various messy play and arts and crafts activities including sand, water play, painting and playdough. Very good use was being made of loose parts, natural and open-ended resources within the playrooms which challenged and motivated the children and encouraged them to explore, develop their imagination and be creative. Children were able to independently select resources and choose which activities they wished to take part in. However, staff should review the layout of the playroom and the range of activities set out each day by staff in advance of the children's arrival.

All the playrooms had direct access to a large and varied outdoor play area which was accessible throughout the day. As a result of the previous inspection a recommendation was made to increase the children's opportunities to access resources outdoors to meet all aspects of the curriculum. This had been fully met. The outdoor area contained a wide range of loose parts which offered the children the opportunity to take part in a wide range of play and learning experiences. All the children were extremely enthusiastic about being outdoors taking part in imaginative and investigative play.

The service had use of a wooded area a short walk from the nursery which they accessed every two weeks for outdoor learning. This was a popular activity with the children and their families who volunteered to assist. Staff would benefit from outdoor training to enhance their knowledge and skills in this area. As part of the inspection we signposted the manager to useful best practice documents and websites.

### Care Inspectorate grade: very good

During the previous Care Inspectorate inspection, the setting had no requirements and three recommendations. From these, three recommendations have been met. As a result of this inspection, there are no requirements and no recommendations.



## Explanation of terms of quantity

The following standard Education Scotland terms of quantity are used in this report:

All	100%
Almost all	91%-99%
Most	75%-90%
Majority	50%-74%
Minority/less than half	15%-49%
A few	less than 15%

Other quantitative terms used in this report are to be understood as in common English usage.